THE NEW NATIONAL ERA AND CITIZEN,
PUBLISHED
EVERY THURSDAY MORNING
At Washington City, D. C.
BY THE
NEW NATIONAL ERA AND CITIZEN COMPANY.

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TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION: Single copies, $2.50 per year; five copies for $10, payable in advance.

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NEW NATIONAL ERA AND CITIZEN.

VOL. IV.—NO. 21.] WASHINGTON, D. C., THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1873. [$2.50 a year in advance. 5 Copies for $10.

COMMUNICATIONS.

[THE NEW NATIONAL ERA does not hold itself responsible for views expressed by correspondents. Well written and interesting communications will be gladly received.]

Legislation and Society.

To the Editors of the New National Era and Citizen:

Of all the subjects which tend to strengthen, enlarge, and elevate the human mind there is none so great as that branch of jurisprudence known as legislation; for, Sharswood says, "It is the noblest work in which the intellectual powers of man can be engaged, as it resembles most nearly the work of the Deity."

It was a philosophical maxim of Plato, as stated in his "Dialogue on Laws," that the end of legislation is to make men virtuous; but the impracticability of this as a fundamental principle is so apparent, that we do not hesitate to accept that of another and greater school of philosophy which owes its popularity chiefly to Bacon. This profound philosopher states that the end of legislation is the well-being of the people.

The evident wisdom of Bacon's proposition is clearly seen when we examine the relation that society and law bear to each other.

Civil society in its earliest infancy was nurtured and protected by law. Supported as the strong and stately oak supports the ivy. Through all its extensive ramifications society feels the moral influence of law. Its very existence depends on the laws which maintain it, and from which it derives the nourishment that is so vitally indispensable to its perfect development and support. By the moral effects of law our society is meant, all the moral influences which a well-organized system of laws tends to produce on the religious, political, commercial, and social status of a community.

As society was first established through law, so it has continued to owe its rapid and marked development to the same cause. In support of this position we take a retrospective glance, and, by the aid of history, find many instances of the effects to which we allude. The state of society found in Athens in the early part of the sixth century furnishes an interesting illustration to this effect. That beautiful city of Greece, of which, even at this distant period history is proud to speak, often dwelling with mournful regret on the utter degradation to which she was brought by the introduction of new laws, consequent on the invasion of the Persians. Up to that period she stood forth preëminent among her sister-cities for her commerce, her philosophy, and her fine arts; and the individual relations of men were better understood and more respected in consequence of the excellence of those institutions of learning, which made Greece so famous among the nations of the world, and all this the effect of those wise laws promulgated by Solon and his successors.

As proof that law was the cause of these beneficial effects on society, we have but to contrast this condition of Greece before the conquest with that which followed, when new regulations were established under a far different code of laws, introducing, as they did, a new and less enlightened element which uprooted their old institutions, and so demoralized their social relations, that anarchy usurped the place of order, the fine arts shared the fate of her lost liberty, the free, national spirit of the Athenian departed forever, and Greece from her lofty eminence was leveled in the dust, the shame of her pride and the scorn of the world.

At a more advanced period we find similar effects following like cause in one of the greatest Empires, and in her day the mistress of the world.

Rome was most flourishing under Justinian, in whose reign the Roman civil law was adjusted and compiled, the influence of which is still felt in the legislation and law of the world. While the government of Rome was in a peaceful and tranquil state society flourished, but when, as so frequently happened, the laws were abrogated by bad rulers, or the State left without any, society became corrupt. The rapid and successive changes of rulers produced a corresponding fluctuation in society, each in its turn tending to weaken the structure of the government, eventually resulting in that deplorable condition commonly known as the fall of the Roman Empire, clearly proving what we have already stated—that a good system of laws is absolutely necessary to strengthen, promote, and permanently establish a healthy state of society, for the great end and object of all civil government should be to guard and give security to life, liberty, and property.

In all countries where civilization is in an advanced state, where learning and manners have attained to any degree of refinement, the advantageous influences of law must be admitted.

But the law must be good, and the administration of it wise, no law being good which does not tend to raise the standard of society, and even the maladministration of good laws is injurious, often retarding the progress of a people.

We have innumerable instances in support of this view. History is full of interesting cases where the effects of good laws have been perverted to serve the selfish ends of ambitious rulers.

Take for example that celebrated case of Warren Hastings' maladministration in British India, where wise laws were so infamously prostituted as to inspire the people of Hindostan with hatred and fear rather than love and respect. The influence was bad. The good effect of the laws was destroyed by unwise administration. Directly or indirectly the influence here was felt throughout this vast empire, and not only by the people of India, but fifteen thousand miles away across the ocean, in England itself, this adverse influence was felt. The English people, free themselves, could not sit tamely down and see the very laws under which they themselves were governed so abused to serve the rapacious ends of one ambitious man.

The wrongs of an outraged people found a champion.

Hindostan, with its vast cities, its gorgeous pagodas, its infinite swarms of dusky population, its long-descended dynasties, its stately etiquette, excited in the capacious imagination and susceptible mind of Burke such intense interest that, to borrow the words of Macaulay, "Under the ancient arches of Westminster Hall, in the name of the English people, at the bar of the English nobles, he pleaded for great nations and kings separated from him by half the world."

Thus we see the beneficial effects of laws on society, when even *good* laws badly administered produce such unhappy results, and as these evil consequences were owing to unsound legislation or maladministration, so are the beneficial effects accruing to our modern society seen and felt in the various relations of life; the result of the sound policy of our laws. Trace the gradual improvement of our laws, note the development and almost perfectness of our system, and observe the good effects on society. The law for the prevention and punishment of crime affords an illustration to this point, and we find that taking cognizance of all wrongs or unlawful acts, the law has a double view, viz: not only to redress the party injured, either by restoring his right, if possible, or by giving him an equivalent, but also to guarantee to the public the benefit of security by preventing or punishing every breach and violation of those laws which the sovereign power has thought proper to establish for the government and tranquility of the whole.

The effect created by punishment on society is clearly of a moral nature, for the great end and object of punishment is to deter men from offending by their frequent and unchecked depredations, otherwise society would drift toward degradation.

This we know. We have not far to go to find an illustration in support of it. We do not want a more prominent case than that which exists in our midst.

Has not society suffered even in this free country from the unchecked depredations of banditti as fierce and lawless as any that ever infested the mountain passes of Italy, or stalked with savage mein through the desolate streets of Rome? Here in this great Republic, the cradle of liberty; here in America in the nineteenth century, in the centre of civilization, in the heart of flourishing cities and peaceful country towns, has not society been exposed for years to the most atrocious crimes, and suffered in endless ways from the demoralizing effects caused by the unchecked depredations of the accursed K. K. K.?

Laws that cannot be carried into effect to serve the ends for which they were designed, were better abolished, for they only tend to exhibit the weakness of the Government. The relation between Law and Society may be presented in the character of a contract according to which one is to yield perfect obedience, while the other guarantees perfect security. So when social rights are infringed, law is bound to provide a remedy; and this is generally by punishment, for, as the great Sir Mathew Hale says: "When offenses grow enormous, frequent and dangerous to a Kingdom or State, destructive or highly pernicious to civil society, severe punishment, and even death itself, is necessary.

Not only is this beneficial effect produced by law upon the domestic concerns of a nation, but also upon foreign affairs, when questions involving international duty arise.

The late Treaty of Washington is a high example in support of this proposition. Through this treaty the rights and duties of two great nations have been clearly defined, their national honor respected, their political relations strengthened, that community of interest so common between them more firmly established, their commercial intercourse extended, and their social relations more harmoniously united.

In no age, at no time, ancient or modern, has any antiquated or time-honored precedent been more effectually thrust aside. The universal resort to arms to settle questions of a similar nature—a barbarous custom unsuited to the progress of a century so distinguished by improvements, intellectual, moral, and material—was abandoned.

Law was given the place of arms, and the world has seen the truth of those trite words—words used by Richelieu verified—"The pen is indeed mightier than the sword." For the vexed questions of international policy have been satisfactorily settled by the peaceful adjustment of treaty; and, instead of war and its countless evils, we have peace, with a hearty reconciliation between two great people.

J. M. H.

Horrible for a Civilized Land.

Whose heart does not shrink back with horror and disgust, and whose blood does not boil within his veins, when he reads the accounts of such horrible butcheries as that which took place in Grant Parish, Louisiana. We have heard and read of some of the horrors and inhuman butcheries which Rome was accustomed to experience, and we have frequently read of fearful tragedies in heathen lands, but when we come to hear of such causeless and unparalleled slaughter in a land bearing the name of Christianity on its bosom, we are horror stricken. We had hoped that Fort Pillow slaughters were over, but it seems that the Colfax massacre was a parallel scene.

It was the meanest and most cowardly act for a strong force to attack a weak party, force them from their place of security and butcher them in cold blood. The butchery seems to have been prosecuted in the most shocking manner, men with their great knives stabbing and cutting on right and left, walking upon the dead, and with the stocks of their guns beating out the brains of those that were not yet dead. Who can imagine the depth of the malice that is still in the breasts of these people? From these facts we may learn that "a chained tiger is a tiger still." For all the hitherto dominant party has been overpowered and put down, that demon-like spirit is still in them; and all they need is the power and they would again bind the chains as tight as ever upon the African people. The fact that five thousand negroes have been murdered in twenty-seven parishes of Louisiana since the close of the war, proves that the democracy of the South is no better reconciled than it was when the North and South stood face to face in battle array. We learn that colored persons have been continually disappearing from various localities of the South since the close of the war. Now, what is the cause of these things? Where lies the fault in these matters? Which is the guilty party? Is the black man such an offensive being in the South that he cannot be left alone? Does he create such disturbance and violence that no one can live peaceably with him? Facts prove the contrary. Does it not suffice the white man of the South to have kept the colored man in chains two hundred and fifty years, to have reduced him to a state of degradation, to have inflicted upon him all manner of torture and suffering, to have taken the reward of our labor and the labor of our fathers to increase his wealth, while we ourselves are left in poverty and wretchedness? Ought not these things to be sufficient to satisfy the mind of any but a demon? No, these are not sufficient. So long as he sees a colored person breathing the pure air of liberty, laboring for his own household, having property around him, and attending to his own business, he is not satisfied. Do these people imagine that God has created one race to be domineered over by another and be a continual prey for it? Instinct should teach them better.

Says one of the assailiants at the Colfax massacre, "We shan't have no more trouble with the niggers in Grant Parish, and when as clean a job is made in every parish in the State we shall begin to have some quiet, and niggers will know their place." I would ask wherein has the negro ever been a disturber of the public quiet? There are no citizens more quiet and law-abiding when they are not disturbed; and in every instance where disturbance has been made in the South, the aggressor was on the other side. In all the Ku Klux outrages the cause can be traced to some of their former oppressors. The assailiant says "the niggers will know their place." This is an expression we frequently hear among many of the whites: "*know their place*," and I would like to know what they mean by it. What particular place has the colored man more than the white man? What place would the white man assign him? He has all the rights of citizenship, eligible to any of the offices of the nation, has the right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness, hence what does the Southerner (and not only the Southerner, for we have heard the expression in the North,) mean when he speaks of the negro forgetting his place? We think the interpretation is this, that while they are constrained to acknowledge the negro's natural endowments and his susceptibility to places of eminence, they would nevertheless desire to see him a few degrees lower than themselves, and are never willing to set him on a perfect level with themselves. This seems to be the meaning of the phrase "know their place." I know not how others may view this kind of spirit, but as for myself, I think it a good sign of low breeding and ignorance, and shows a want of good mother wit. This spirit which has been nurtured in the breast of many has led to the horrible butcheries of Grant Parish.

It was a breach of inconceivable injustice for the McEneryites to endeavor to overthrow the legal authority and butcher some three hundred persons in cold blood. We know not how justice is to be arrived at in such cases. From the statement of the same person as quoted above, the assailiants would fain carry out their hellish desires in a similar manner throughout the whole South; yea, may I not say wherever there is a colored man breathing free air. Oh, the blood boils and the heart sickens in reflecting upon these things! "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore (it seems) the hearts of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." How long shall these vile monsters in the shape of human beings stalk through the land with their hands dripping with innocent blood?

All these things are the relics of slavery, and it will take generations to eradicate the evils; yet some are so presumptuous as to say it has been beneficial to the black man. May I not endorse such heresy till I can be persuaded that good can come out of hell! It will take more than *this* generation to dig out all the roots of slavery; yea, more than the next three can do. Had it not been for that accursed institution, the South might today have been the garden spot of America, whereas it is the scene of continual dread and bloodshed. The very soil has been cursed on account of slavery.

But we hope the South's future will tell a better story. We look to the time when the place where the black man has been bound will be the place of his triumphs and dominion; and in the language of Cicero, let eternal justice, which is the basis of all human laws, be meted out to every man.

G. M. ELLIOTT.

Letter from Mississippi.

VICKSBURG, MISS., May 19, 1873.

To the Editors of the New National Era and Citizen:

From a short editorial notice in the ERA of the 8th instant, I judge that a person in Jackson, unknown to me, attempted to "go for your heathen Chinee"—"*Civis!*" I wish the writer had couched his letter in such language as becomes a correspondent for the public press, so that I might have known his reasons for attacking me, as sometimes these rejoinders serve to sharpen one's quill by way of a replication.

We are all anxiously waiting to have the decision of our Supreme Court on a test case under the civil right's bill which passed our Legislature at its recent session. The most of our leading lawyers, who are also leading Democrats, contend that the construction of the bill is in violation of our Constitution, and they were quite willing to have the bill passed upon by our Supreme Court.

All of the proprietors of hotels have resorted to a contemptible dodge by hanging out signs that they no longer keep public hotels, but that their houses are "for the accommodation of selected guests and personal friends!" And the proprietors of places of public amusement generally give notice "that no one will be admitted but those who have special invitations, and a contribution will be expected from all who accept those invitations towards defraying the expense of the entertainment!" Can the devil in his regions invent evasive clauses more adapted to his cause than the above? And yet these very men, who are the head and front of all this invidious distinction, are hard at work to-day endeavoring to impress the more unfortunate and laboring classes of the colored men that *they* are our best friends. In fact, they are now sounding around among some of our leading colored men to get them to accept places on their State ticket, with the hope of dividing the Republican party next fall. But they are too well known to be trusted; and the only way in which they can gain the confidence of the negro is by joining hands with him in laboring in the ranks of the Republican party. Too much has already been done to palliate these men, who at heart are haters of the doctrine of equality before the law for all men. As in the past few years the moment they declared their intention to join the Republican party they were placed at the front and rewarded with some of the best offices in the gift of the people. We are willing to offer inducements for all men to come and join us, but a man fresh from the heart of the Democratic party ought to go through a probationary service before being placed at the front of the Republican party. It seems that, notwithstanding we have demonstrated our capacity in every respect in maintaining our position as a citizen of this Government during the rapid strides it has made in the last twelve years, yet we are left to fight inch by inch for the last remaining right that is kept from us. When the question of arming the negro was sprung to assist in putting down the rebellion, some of our timid citizens thought it would have a tendency to weaken the cause of the Union; but were it not for the assistance of negro troops our country might have been rent asunder. When the question of emancipation was sprung, some of our timid citizens thought it was premature, and it would be dangerous to emancipate four millions of human beings by a stroke of the pen, and that they would be wards of the nation for a quarter of a century; but the negro to-day is as prosperous as any other citizen, considering the condition from which he came, and the exhibits of the Freedman's Bank will show his frugality. When it was proposed by old Thaddeus Stevens to reconstruct the South by placing the ballot in the hands of her loyal citizen—the negro—our timid citizens thought the ballot would be a dangerous weapon in the hands of the ignorant negro; but history shows that he has wielded it for the protection of our country at all times. And now, when we ask for our last remaining right, there goes up a terrible howl as of days of yore from our timid citizens about social equality! Why, Mr. Editor, there is no class of persons in this country who have demonstrated their love of social equality as those white citizens of the South have. I see a practical demonstration of it for two or three generations back whenever I look in the glass. And next winter, when the bill is sprung in Congress, and the old howl of social equality is made by the Democratic members, let Pinchback, Rainey, Lynch, Ransier, and others stand up as living monuments of the social equality these haters of civil equality would have, but to which we are opposed. And when our civil rights shall have been attained, not only in this State, but in our entire country, it will be acknowledged by all classes that the negro will be as welcome a guest at our hotels, places of amusement, and public carriers, as any other citizen.

We have had a case under the civil rights' bill in this city which was taken before our city judge, but he decided against us. In March last John G. Saxe lectured here, and one of our colored citizens applied for a ticket, but was refused. He took the case before our city judge, and our side was ably argued by our district attorney. But the judge, who is an old vacillating and wiry politician, who, I am sorry to say, was elected by Republicans, thought he would take the case under advisement, and he kept it under advisement for six long weeks, when he was almost forced to render a decision. And after giving notice that he was ready to decide the question, he read a manuscript of about forty pages, I should judge, as it took up nearly four columns of our daily papers, passing upon the bill, with a view, I suppose of instructing our Supreme Court how to pass upon the case before it, and decided that it was novel in its character, and intruded upon the long-established custom of this people, &c., &c., and dismissed the case.

The colored people were indignant at the manner of his decision, as the bill was the law of the State, and his duty was simply to decide whether the defendant was guilty of a violation of the law or not. We felt that an indignation meeting ought to be held, and with but one day's notice, about six hundred citizens assembled in our court-house, and passed resolutions of the strongest character, and requested him to resign.

OUR POLITICAL CAULDRON

has commenced to boil, and warm times may be expected in this State until next November. Chief among the candidates for gubernatorial honors are General Ames, one of our present United States Senators, and George Powers, our present Governor. The colored people, as well as the loyal white men, feel a sense of obligation to General Ames which is lasting. In the troublesome times of 1869 he took the helm of State and carried us safely to victory. He protected us from all manner of dangers, and displayed the stiffness of a West Point ramrod. He showed courage, he showed stability, and he showed true manliness toward all our citizens, irrespective of color. And since he has been in the Senate he has proven himself a true friend of humanity, and an earnest advocate of equal rights for all men. Our colored citizens feel all the more attached to him because of an effort made by a certain class of our citizens to drive him, as it were, from the State. He is the most hated of all men by the Democrats, simply because they cannot manage him. He is like Grant, immovable in his principles, and unyielding in his demands; and those are elements of sure success. Governor R. C. Powers, who is the other chief aspirant for gubernatorial honors, is much milder than General Ames—milder in almost every respect. He is as pliable as Ames is unyielding. When I use the word pliable, however, I do not mean to say that Powers would yield a principle to the Democracy, but he would go further to compromise with the opposition than Ames would. He is a mild, calm gentleman, and does not show much fight about him, though we do not know what the contest might develop in him. He is largely engaged in planting in the State, and I do not really think he cares whether he receives the nomination or not, as he would be just as satisfied seeing the beautiful white bolls of cotton thickly scattered over his plantation as to occupy the Executive Mansion.

The candidates for Lieutenant Governor are all colored men, as we have decided that this as well as two other positions must be filled by colored men. At present they are Colonel B. K. Bruce, the present able sheriff of Bolivar county; Hon. A. K. Davis, one of the leading members of the Legislature of Noxubee county; Hon. Charles Caldwell, the able Senator from Hinds and Rankin counties; Hon. H. R. Revels, Secretary of State; and I do not know but that certain circumstances might bring out Colonel S. J. Ireland, of Alcorn University.

In my next I may commence a few *personals* of leading men of the State and outside the Legislature.

CIVIS.

Letter from Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, May 20, 1873.

To the Editors of the New National Era and Citizen:

Discreditable as are the periodical punishments at the whipping-post and in the pillory, one of which our sister State, Delaware, gloated over quite recently, we think we could be willing spectators of such a scene if the only criminal present were the party who conceived and executed our last exhibition of public canvassing.

The Republican party in this city nominates candidates for the positions of Sheriff, Register of Wills, Clerk of Orphan's Court, City Treasurer, and City Commissioner next month. Ambitious politicians are actively laboring to secure votes and thus secure the nominations of their favorites, as we nominate by what is known as the Crawford county system. The slate pavement in front of the "row" is marked by the heels of countless hosts where diurnal consultations are both loud and deep. One of our colored politicians, who holds a small government position, who had doubtless promised *all* his immense constituency's support to a prominent candidate for Sheriff, conceived the brilliant plan of appealing to that constituency through the medium of their grosser appetites. The city was flooded with complimentary tickets for a grand promenade concert to be given at Liberty Hall on the 8th of May. The industrious manipulator and several of his agents, on representations that the better classes of the colored people would be present on that occasion, had sold numbers of tickets to the numerous officials of our city, and doubtless by this means obtained various amounts of money from the different candidates. The evening of the 8th came. Liberty Hall was in a blaze of glory. A motley crew of whites and blacks, male and female, for the most part denizens of the "classic localities" in that vicinity, had there congregated. Jig dancing, the mazy waltz, the stately quadrille, the sipping of champagne, the guzzling of viler fluids, the gormandizing of solids made the affair far from monotonous. The aspirants were on hand in force and we are informed they went home persuaded that their money had not been spent in vain, and that the suffrages of the representatives of 22,147 colored people of this city had been secured thereby. What words can sufficiently stigmatize this degenerate son of so noble a sire? What madness could have induced the owners of the hall to rent it for such a purpose is beyond our comprehension. Now that the affair has excited general comment, some of them loudly denounce it, and characterize it as an insult and libel upon the intelligence and respectability of our people, and desire to unite in a call for a meeting for its condemnation.

Our Board of Education have recommended to the City Council an appropriation of fifteen hundred dollars for the building of an addition to the James Forten colored school. In view of the fact that in so many of our sister cities colored schools have been legislated out of existence this is no evidence of progress. The passage of the Civil Rights Bill by the next Congress will obviate its necessity. It is much to be regretted that some of our well-to-do philanthropists have not been more solicitous in the matter of obtaining proper school facilities for colored children in our city. Were it not for the great work which the Society of Friends has done in maintaining the Institute for Colored Youth, our children would not have secured any other than a most meagre education; and the work of this institution has been much retarded by the superficial character of the instruction imparted in the public schools. In striking contrast to *our* paucity of school facilities, our neighboring city, Camden, with a population of 20,045, of which but 826 are colored, has been recently amalgamated with several adjoining townships, thus increasing its colored population to about 2,500, has one colored representative in the Board of Education, and three schools employing eight teachers. The largest of these schools, under the principalship of Wm. H. F. Armstrong, and located in the eighth ward of that city, is really a model school. In 1869, an unclassified school with but one teacher, it has increased under his management to such an extent that in place of occupying a dingy building, illy ventilated and miserably furnished, there has been built for it a neat, four division school, with all the modern improvements. The average attendance during the last winter reached one hundred and ninety pupils. The Board have in contemplation the erection of an eight division school in the sixth ward, to the principalship of which we hope to see this promising young man promoted.

Camden, though in the State of New Jersey, which is facetiously assigned a place outside the limits of the United States, is a live city in many respects. Besides the colored member in the Board of Education, Mr. Jacob B. Thompson, grocer, in March, 1872, Mr. Joseph H. Hall, a builder, was elected a member of the City Council from the eighth ward, and his constituency numbers more whites than blacks. Dempsey Butler, Esq., is a large real estate holder, and Mr. Charles N. Robinson, a rising young man, is universally respected. Many Philadelphians have expended considerable money in land and houses, among whom are Henry Minton, James M. Baxter, Levi Cromwell, Geo. H. Wilson, and J. Whipper Purnell, the last of whom now holds three hundred building lots and several houses in the heart of Camden. Minton's interests, as well as Baxter's are far from inconsiderable. Its contiguity to Philadelphia, cheap rents, cheap ferriage and cheapness of living make it a desirable residence. Farms have given place to rows of houses, large firms are locating numerous manufactories, and everything shows progress and thrift. Quite an interesting discussion has arisen on the question of colored schools, and a strong supporter of Grant in the late campaign has written several articles in defense of the separate school system, in view of the proposed action of the Board in building the new school houses in the sixth ward, which have been ably combatted in the Camden *Republican* by Col. Saunders, of Greeley fame, who justly argues that the day for separate schools is past.

Isaiah C. Wears, Esq., at the Civil Rights demonstration in New York, on the evening of the 15th inst., expressed rather a "happy thought" in these words: "It is complained that we have no more great men. We don't need them. We have improved so much that all are great men; all the great men have been ground up for making great measures." However axiomatic this might be in the world of politics, in the greater world of business our country possesses not a few giants.

The Pennsylvania Railroad's steady increase in importance, wealth, and stability, has served to publish far and wide the name of Col. Thomes A. Scott, and to his master intellect much of the success of the American Steamship Company in their efforts to revive the foreign commerce of this port is no doubt due. On the morning of the 22d inst., the steamship Pennsylvania, owned by Pennsylvania capitalists, built of Pennsylvania iron, wrought by Pennsylvania mechanics, sailed majestically down the Delaware, the *avant courier* of a line of noble vessels. May each one prove—

"A vessel as goodly and strong and staunch
As ever weathered a wintry sea."

BAN-NAH-BAN.

Letter from Arkansas.

PINE BLUFF, ARK., *May* 14, 1873.

To the Editors of the New National Era and Citizen:

After a long and weary session our Legislature finally adjourned on the 24th ultimo. No bills of moment were passed and signed except the civil-rights bill, the new common school bill, and the normal school bill. By the latter we are likely to get a normal school for the training of colored teachers. This will be a normal college, as a part of the State University. The one in connection with the University has been appropriated by our white students, partly because of the sparse population of colored people in the northwestern part of the State, where it is located, and partly by the larger number of whites who were appointed as beneficiaries. This one will be located toward the southeast part of the State, where the largest majority of the colored people live; and on this account, as well as the disposition to educate the two races separately, it will be left mostly to them.

Over three Republican Legislatures have seen fit to legislate for separate schools, which in cities work but little hardship; but in the country districts it creates the necessity of twice the number of schools in most townships. The people, young and old, white and colored, work and play together; but when it comes to matters of schools and churches, the line of demarkation is drawn with intense rigidity. We, who see the evil in all its deformity, think it best to make the *best* of it, as the general matter of education can be furthered by so doing. We wish to get the free schools well established even if it does cost more. The hope of this part of the country is sound physical, mental, and moral education.

We are much disappointed in most of the colored teachers who come from the northern States and from Canada. They do not seem to have any kindred feeling with the natives, but hold themselves up as superior, and soon come out as politicians, caring nothing for the educational interests, but all for the votes. Of the many who have come in the three years past, only one has acted in a manly and true manner in this region.

While we note the improvement of the people, which, considering all things, is quite encouraging, we must not be blind to the hindrances, one of which is a strong caste feeling among our colored people. I will instance a case. Our county has a majority of colored citizens, but very few with even a common education; yet an offer was made to have appointed two out of three supervisors, simply because of this majority, when there is not a competent colored man for the position in the county, and but little property held by them. In many other ways is this shown, when better men—strong Republican whites—are plenty. Clannishness is the last feature we who have espoused their cause and labored and borne for them want to see. Caste and colorphobia will be a rock to split on unless it is guarded against. We must take the man or woman (as the case may be) without regard to color, or our system is a failure.

M. W. MARTIN.

Letter from Norfolk.

NORFOLK, VA., May 21, 1873.

To the Editors of the New National Era and Citizen:

If there is any one thing more beyond that of a demand on the General Government for a liberal system of education, it is that our children should be put to trades. The colored mechanics, who were made so under the *regime* of slavery, are fast dying off; indeed, while living, they are driven to labor for a mere pittance. The most piteous pleading of distressed widows who lost their husbands during the late war, falls everywhere in obtaining for their children apprenticeships. It would be too lengthy and tedious were I to inform you to what extent we have labored to have our youth apprenticed at the Norfolk navy-yard. "Examinations" go for nothing when a colored boy is the subject. When he is not caught on a quibble, he is pronounced to be in bad health. In the meantime the said yard is being filled with white apprentices, two-thirds of whom—should an examining board be commissioned direct from Washington to sit upon each case—would be ruled out. After all, we have succeeded in getting in one colored apprentice, who had to prove himself to be a Daniel Webster almost. It would seem, also, that no colored water-boy—water-bearer—is allowed in this yard. White boys perform this office, not only in serving white men, but they are equally required to do the same by colored gangs who muster by hundreds. We have labored hard, but have failed to get in one. And this solves the question on apprenticeships. The Executive Committee for this yard, of which a colored man is secretary, have performed their whole duty touching these matters.

Curtis' "Civil Service Reform" puts its veto on the hopes of our aspiring youth, as the perpetrators of the above deeds fall behind it for protection. Let it be fully applied, modified, or set aside.

We should have our just quota of mechanics, apprentices, laborers, overseers, water-bearers, &c., &c.

The matter becomes alarming when viewed from our standpoint. Out of the five or six hundred colored mechanics living here in 1860-61, the next decade must end with the last that now breathe, according to our ratio.

My faith in the American people does not lead me to believe that the day will never come when expatriation or forced emigration will not show itself in some form or other, in which case no one could calculate our torment. It is to be regretted that, in the process of reconstruction, the State government and the Government at Washington have failed us in the above particulars. Of course we expect nothing from our Democratic State but a suspension of the public free schools, as that is a fact to-day. How anomalous and unfair!—the State gives us no equal school system, and the United States requires equality of scholarships, with a knowledge of certain rules to be recited before being received as an apprentice!! It would seem to be a joint connivance at our utter demoralization. But I must fail in finding expression of all I may think on the subject.

"VIRGINIA."

Letter from New Jersey.

PLAINFIELD, N. J., May, 17, 1873.

To the Editors of the New National Era and Citizen:

The colored people of New Jersey have heretofore been rather dilatory about expressing public sentiment relating to their political, industrial, and educational interests. But following the good example of some of their sister-States, they have at last come to the conclusion that it would be judicious for them to assemble in a collective body at New Brunswick, Middlesex county, on the 3d day of June, 12 o'clock m.

The call for this convention treats of the following, viz: Fellow-citizens: We are again called upon to meet in State convention to take into consideration grave matters of public policy affecting our best interests, and of vital importance to us all as citizens of this Commonwealth. There are many questions of importance other than our political interests that demand immediate action, and among them are the pursuits of labor—professional, mechanical, and agricultural.

"Our educational interests need our fostering care, and the establishment and support of proper facilities of information and the general diffusion of sentiments and views upon all questions affecting us as citizens of this State should receive our earnest attention.

"TRIED MEN.

"Fellow-citizens: Let us take immediate action and select as our representatives tried men; men who have the interests of the people at heart, whose deliberations shall reflect credit to the State, profit to the people, and honor upon themselves.

"Each ward of cities, incorporated towns, and villages shall be entitled to three delegates and alternates, to be elected by the voters of said towns and villages at a meeting called for the purpose on or before the last Tuesday in May. Political club leagues and societies shall be entitled to send one delegate and alternate. In no case shall a non-resident represent a ward city or village. All citizens of this and other States interested are invited to come and sit with us, but not as delegates.

"N. B.—Papers friendly will please publish the call."

ONE AMONG US.

The call for this convention was first prompted and urged by our indefatigable townsman Rev. John D. Bagwell, editor of the New Jersey State *Republican*. Rev. Mr. Bagwell is known throughout the State as a man of profound ability, an orator and able writer, ever ready to take up and discuss at all events any question affecting the interests of his race in all the relations of life.

COMING TO LIGHT.

The long obscure and benighted eyes and illiterate minds of the colored people of this State are now apparently opened, and they now comprehend the cause of their ignorance. They are now saying, "How shall we obtain a redress from this maladministration?"

JESSE LAWSON.

THINGS A MARRIED WOMAN CANNOT HELP THINKING.—That she was a very pretty girl at sixteen. That she had, or would have had, a great many good offers. That all her lady friends are five years older than they say they are. That she has a very fine mind. That if her husband had acted on her advice he would be a richer man today. That people think too much of the looks of that Miss ——, who would not be called handsome if she didn't make herself up. That her mother-in-law is a very trying woman. That her girls are prettier than Mrs. A.'s girls. That she would like to know where her husband spends his evenings when he stays out. That her eldest son takes after him. That he is going to throw himself away on Miss Scraggs. That Miss Scraggs sets her cap for him, and did all the courting. That her servant girls are the worst ever known. That she has taste in dress. That she has a good temper. That she pities old maids.

Railroads will make towns. In the Borough of Birdsboro', on the Wilmington & Reading Railroad, eighty-three buildings were erected during last year.

Every man must, in a measure, be alone in the world. No heart was ever cast in the same mold as that which we bear within us.—*Berne.*